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COMM335 - February 27, 1990
First Gov't Beat Story - Orange County Board of Supervisors

If the law is the backbone which keeps man erect as S.C. Yuter once wrote, then the Orange County Board of Supervisors suffered a pain in the lower portion of that backbone during its Tuesday meeting when it stumbled upon what one county staff member called a slight "technicality" in a new law.

The legislature in Sacramento recently enacted a law, Statute 7028.15E, which was designed to eliminate unlicensed contractors from the bidding processes of public agencies. But due to confusion in implementing this new statute construction bids previously received by the county for six major projects were in jeopardy of being rejected.

A name would be better than the number

The new statute required that contractors indicate the date of expiration of their contractor's licenses in the documents submitted to any public agency when placing a bid for a contract with that agency. The idea was that unlicensed contractors would not be able to provide the necessary information and therefore would be eliminated from the process.

Unfortunately the Associated General Contractors legislative committee in Sacramento, which had taken part in proposing this statute, failed to notify its membership of this change. The issue was further complicated when the county failed to provide space on its forms or any other indication that this information was needed. Consequently all bids received after the first of

WHAT WOULD KEEP SOMEONE FROM JUST MAKING UP A DATE?

the year, with the exception of one, did not contain this information and therefore could not be accepted by the county.

In view of all the confusion, county staff and legal counsel recommended to the supervisors that they reject all previous bids and reopen the bidding process on March 28.

During testimony that followed the staff report the representatives of several contractors registered angry complaints that their legitimate bids were going to be rejected because of a "trivial" oversight, in the words of one representative, that was designed to catch unlicensed contractors.

Several representatives asked that the supervisors either delay voting for two weeks on whether to reject the bids or waive the requirement. One said that he had met last week with the Associated General Contractors legislative committee in Sacramento and that they were recommending that emergency legislation be passed that would repeal the troubling statute. He said that State Senator John Seymour and Assemblyman Gil Ferguson, who had sponsored the original bill, were pushing the rewritten bill through the legislature. He said that it would be about two weeks before the corrected bill would become law.

Just repeal it? Not clean it up??

? Missing word??

The representative of the one contractor to supply the needed information with his bid angrily demanded that his bid, being the lowest legal bid, be accepted. County staff and legal counsel remained firm that the proper course of action would be

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WOULDN'T THIS DELAY SOME NEEDED WORK TOO?

to reject the current bids and accept new bids at the end of March.

When another representative quoted a legal precedence for delaying action by the board Supervisor Don Roth responded, "Thank you sir, you proved my point that we're heading for litigation no matter what we do."

The proposal to reject and re-bid the six projects was passed with a vote of 3-1-1. ← THAT MEANS AN ABSTENTION. THE VOTE WAS 3-1 Supervisor Harriett Wieder cast the one "no" vote and Supervisor Gaddi Vasquez was absent. WITH

Prior to voting on the consent calendar Supervisor Wieder formally welcomed the Consul General of Spain, Eduardo Garrigues to the board meeting. Consul General Garrigues said in a brief speech that Spain has ties to Southern California that run back before the United States' war for independence and continue until today in the region's vast Hispanic community. Pointing to the European unification in 1992 and anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America, he expressed an interest to further the cultural and economic opportunities that these historic events signal.

1st name

Supervisor Stanton noted that ~~the additional twenty~~ 20 high school students WERE attending Tuesday's meeting ~~was~~ because it was the Eighth Annual Youth in Government Day. The project was sponsored by the Latino political awareness organization, LULAC. Supervisor Stanton presented LULAC counsellor Mike Del Rio with a certificate commemorating the LULAC's efforts to give young people first hand exposure to county operations. Del Rio said

that the Youth in Government Day was a county-wide effort and thanked the board for its support by giving each member of the board a certificate of appreciation.

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Score: 90/100

No - more -